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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this manual is to provide Head Start directors, transportation supervisors, and trainers with information and activities that will help develop, enhance, and maintain a safe and efficient transportation system for their programs. Contents are organized into three categories: safety procedures, planning a transportation system, and training strategies and activities. The section on safety includes guidelines for operational safety and emergency procedures. Topics covered range from vehicle maintenance and the rules of safe driving to procedures for accidents, breakdowns, and adverse road conditons. The section on planning addresses the roles and responsibilities of the key members of the transportation team: the transportation manager, bus driver, monitor, other staff, and parents. Special attention is given to the selection and hiring process for bus drivers. In addition, worksheets organized according to questions likely to be asked by drivers, staff, and parents that will assist each Head Start agency in developing its own transportation policies are included. The training section contains sample activities for transportation inservice, addressing such topics as child development and discipline, bus safety, classroom and home safety games, and effective communication. (RH)

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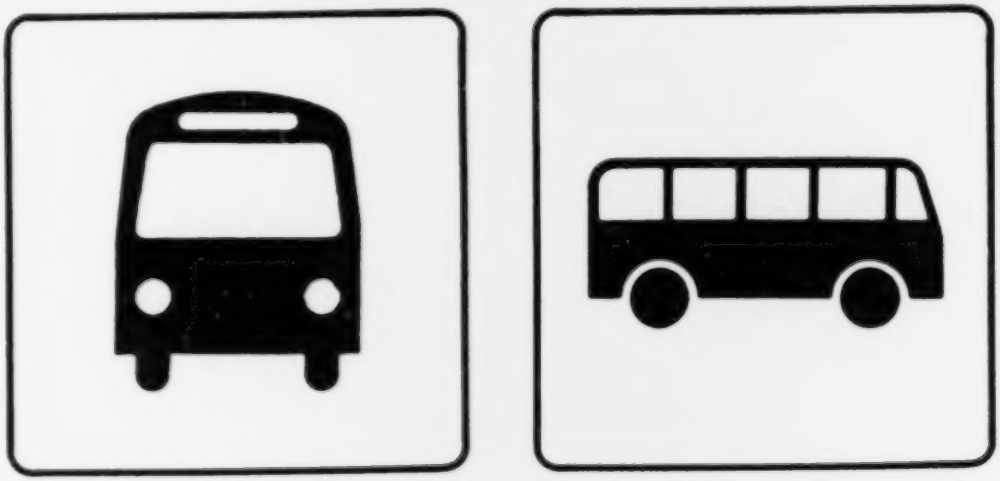
Office of Human Development Services
Administration for Children, Youth and Families
Head Start Bureau

Us in a Bus

A Transportation Manual for Head Start Programs



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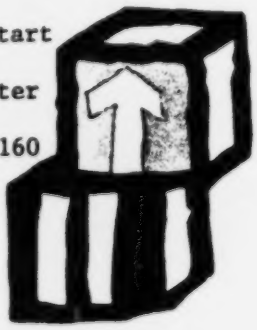

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EDC would like to thank Jane Weil for permission to use "Us in A Bus" for the title of this manual. Ms. Weil is director of the Washington County Children's Program Outreach Project (Machias, Maine), and former director of "Us in A Bus," a traveling preschool for rural Maine.

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Ann Hagenstein
August 1984

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Introduction

The purpose of this manual is to provide Head Start directors, transportation supervisors, and trainers with information and activities that will help develop, enhance, and maintain a safe and efficient transportation system for their programs. Specific goals of the manual are to:

- describe vehicle maintenance procedures and routine vehicle safety checks;
- present strategies and procedures, including some currently in use in Head Start programs, for promoting safe daily operation of a transportation system for young children;
- provide guidelines for procedures to follow during emergencies that may arise while transporting preschool children;
- suggest ways to improve communication among drivers, other staff members, parents, and children;
- provide strategies for training drivers about the behavior and abilities of preschool children;
- provide activities that help parents and teachers train children in safety procedures, and that give preschoolers information about and practice in safe behavior while traveling in buses, vans, and cars.

Obviously a 60-page manual cannot cover everything involved in such a broad topic. We are assuming, for example, that programs are aware of driver certification and vehicle licensing requirements in their own states, and that first aid and safe driving courses are available in or near their communities. We therefore have chosen to focus on issues that pertain directly to the development and integration of a transportation system within a Head Start program, and to select generic topics that cut across individual program and state differences.

This manual has been developed in the belief that transportation is a critical component in the total Head Start program, and that car, van, and bus drivers are very important members of the Head Start team. Nothing can be more important than the safe transportation of small children to and from their Head Start centers. A driver can be one of the most visible links between the center and the home--often the first Head Start face that the children and parents see in the morning. And although we think of learning taking place in the classroom, in reality children also learn on the way to and from school--about safety, about getting along with others, and about acceptable behavior while traveling.

The information in Us in a Bus is organized into three categories: safety, planning, and training. Each section contains practical information that will assist transportation managers, bus drivers, monitors, and parents to develop a system that is safe, reliable, and well-understood by all.

The section on safety includes guidelines for both operational safety and emergency procedures. Topics covered range from vehicle maintenance and the rules of safe driving to procedures for accidents, breakdowns, and adverse road conditions.

The second section of the manual, planning, addresses the roles and responsibilities of the key members of the transportation team: the transportation manager, bus driver, monitor, other staff, and parents. Special attention is also placed on the selection/hiring process for bus drivers. In addition, worksheets that will assist each Head Start agency in developing its own transportation policies are included.

Finally, the training section contains sample activities that will be useful in conducting transportation inservice. Five activities cover topics such as: child development and discipline; bus safety; classroom and home safety games; and effective communication.

Safety Procedures

Safety procedures are the heart of a transportation system. As discussed in this section, these procedures include not only the routines that programs follow for vehicle maintenance and the basic guidelines for transporting preschool children -- operational safety -- but also the policies to be followed in emergencies.

OPERATIONAL SAFETY

There are several components included under the umbrella of Operational Safety. Vehicles must be well-maintained and mechanical problems spotted before they become major crises. Drivers must follow accepted rules for transporting preschool children, including procedures for picking up and delivering passengers, for driving the route, and for driving for special occasions, such as field trips or doctor's visits. And finally, drivers must have enough information about the children and parents they serve and the route they cover to be able to perform their jobs safely and responsibly.

Preventive Equipment Maintenance

Periodic Service. Every program should have a schedule for maintenance that includes periodic inspections as mandated by state laws, and the occasional, but important, maintenance performed by professional garage mechanics such as motor tune-ups, oil changes, lubrications, replacement of worn tires, brake checks, and seasonal preparations (snow tires and antifreeze, for example). The operator's manual that comes with the vehicle will provide specific information on when and how often the vehicle should be serviced. Once a schedule is in place, someone must be responsible for following through.

Daily Inspection. Even when a vehicle is periodically maintained, unforseen problems can arise. The bus driver can play a vital role as a "troubleshooter" by following a daily, five-minute vehicle check. This daily inspection will increase the driver's confidence in using the vehicle and may prevent breakdowns along the route.

The School Bus Inspection and Maintenance Guide, published by General Motors Corporation, includes the following Daily Inspection Form, which drivers can use as they check out the exterior and interior condition of their vehicles, the operation of lights, signals, school bus sign, windshield wipers, horn, defroster, heater, and brakes.

DAILY INSPECTION FORM

Driver's name_____ Bus no._____

Date_____ Odometer reading_____

_____OK _____Needs Attention _____Adjustment Made _____Not Equipped

1. Look Outside the Bus:

___Windshield, mirrors, front windows, headlights-wipe clean.
___Exhaust-tailpipe clear?
___Rear emergency door, open & close.
___Bump tires. OK? Lug nuts in place?
___Drain air brake tank.
___Look under bus-all clear?
___General outside appearance, clean for school bus identification?

2. Look Inside the Bus:

___Seats, floor-housekeeping.
___Emergency exits open & close, rear door, roof, windows.
___Emergency equipment
Fire extinguisher pressure
First aid kit.
___Driver's area-windshield, windows, clean?

3. Starting The Engine:

___Fuel gauge OK? Check brake warning buzzer, neutral safety switch.
___Start engine-look, listen for trouble signs, check gauges.

4. With Engine Running, Check (from driver's seat):

___Mirrors, interior & stepwell lights, service door seal
___Steering feel OK? Noise?
___Horn, defroster & heater blowers, windshield wiper operation.
___Brakes-pedal height & feel, gauge reading OK? Parking brake release, reset.

5. Outside Checks Required Before You Drive Away:

___Turn signals-right/left-front/rear-clean & flashing?
___Flasher warning lights-front/rear-clean & flashing?
___Stop arm-clean & working?
___Headlights hi/lo beams.
___Stoplights/taillights-clean & working.
___Hazard Warning Flasher working?

6. Final Checks As You Move the Bus:

___Seat belt fastened?
___Brakes, Stop & Hold?
___Clutch-OK?
___Steering feel OK? Unusual noises? Bus under control/tracking straight?
___Brake to a stop. All gauges OK?

7. Additional Items Due to Local Conditions:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

IF EVERYTHING IS OK, HAVE A SAFE TRIP.

- - - -

As a final part of the daily inspection, the driver should check to make sure there are no sharp, heavy, or potentially dangerous objects in the vehicle that could hurt the children.

Listen, Feel, Look and Smell for Trouble. Another way a bus driver can help with preventive maintenance is to observe the performance of the vehicle while driving, to learn to recognize symptoms of trouble, and then promptly report anything unusual to the transportation supervisor. Early detection not only can save money and avoid inconvenience, it can also save lives.

Drivers can learn how to listen for trouble. These sounds indicate potential problems: a sharp knock when picking up speed; a light knock when engine is running at idle speed; a dull, regular knock; clicking or tapping noises; continuous or irregular squeals or squeaks; engine backfiring, missing, popping, spitting, or overheating; steaming or hissing; or loud exhaust noises.

Drivers should also be alert to changes in the feel of the vehicle, for example, excessive vibration in the engine compartment, steering wheel, or drive line; a shimmy; or hard or loose steering.

Many problems can be spotted when a driver knows what to look for. A driver should report any of these warning signs: smoke coming from under the dashboard or hood; a sudden drop in oil pressure; low oil pressure or no oil pressure; an above-normal temperature reading; an abnormal reading on ammeter or voltmeter; the burning of too much oil; scuffed tires, or tires that are wearing unevenly.

Finally, drivers can smell for trouble and report the odor of gasoline, burning rubber, oil or rags, or exhaust fumes noticed while the bus is in operation.

Safety Equipment. Finally, in addition to making a daily inspection and watching out for unusual noises, vibrations, smells, and other indications of trouble, drivers must be familiar with the inventory and use of basic safety equipment that should be carried in each vehicle. These include a fire extinguisher, a first aid kit, flares or other road hazard markers, chock blocks for use on steep grades, flashlight, blanket, jack and spare tire. In the winter chains and dry gas (kept in a safe place) can come in very handy. A "travel rope" is a good idea for keeping children together in case the vehicle must be evacuated.

Rules of Safe Driving

Safe driving represents rules of the road that must be observed by drivers of any vehicle in which young children are riding. Whether for daily needs or special events, such as field trips, the following outline represents a compendium of basic rules developed by Departments of Education, Highway Safety Departments, and Head Start programs.

Basic Rules of Conduct. Programs should establish clear guidelines for conduct that let drivers know what is and what is not expected of them. Some of these guidelines will be directly related to safety, and others will have more to do with the smooth operation of the system and the creation of a climate of concern for the well-being of the children.

Several Head Start programs include in their training these general rules of conduct:

- Drivers are asked not to make additional stops during their bus runs. For example, drivers should not stop to buy food or cigarettes or to give rides to friends.
- Drivers are not allowed to eat, drink coffee or other beverages, or smoke during bus runs.
- Drivers should stay on the planned route, except when road conditions dictate a change of plans. (For example, ice on a steep hill or an accident blocking the street.)
- Drivers should not transport children who are not authorized to be on the bus. For example, a parent might ask the driver to drop off a sibling along the route, and the driver should know how to respond.
- Drivers should refuel their vehicles before starting out or after returning from the route, while no children are in the vehicle.

Pick-up and Delivery of Preschool Children.

- Drivers should always pull up to the curb or side of the road to load or unload young children. The parent, the driver, and the center staff all share responsibility for helping the child board and get off the vehicle safely.
- Each child must always wear a seat belt. The seat belt should be in place before the vehicle is in motion. Each seat belt must be used by only one child; this should be checked before the bus drives off.
- Children weighing less than 40 pounds should use a "car seat."
- Drivers should always use their seat belts, both for their own safety and as an example to others.
- When loading or unloading children, if drivers have to get up from their seats, they should remove keys from the ignition to avoid the possibility that a child will try to start the bus.
- The "School Bus" sign (where appropriate) should be in the upright position whenever children are being transported, and the flashing lights should be used whenever children are being loaded or unloaded. The sign should be in the lowered position any time the vehicle is not being used for child transportation, and the red lights should not be used either.

- Vehicles must not cross the road to make a stop with the vehicle facing in the direction of on-coming traffic, nor should vehicles stop on the opposite side of the street and require a child to cross. Vehicles must instead turn around and approach the stop in the correct travel lane.

- When dropping children off at the center, drivers will help them off the bus and escort them to the door of the center, where the teachers or other designated personnel will meet them and take them to the classrooms. At the end of each session, teachers will bring the children to the bus, help them board, and get them settled into their seats with seat belts buckled.

- If no adult is present to receive the child at home after school, the driver should bring the child back to the center so that program policies can then be followed.

On the Route.

- Drivers must observe all posted speed limits on the route, and obey all road and parking laws. (In some programs, violations of road or parking laws are the legal and financial responsibility of the driver.)

- The bus must always come to a full stop at railroad crossings.

- Drivers should never leave a child or children unattended on the bus.

- Children should not be allowed to eat or drink on the bus. Food and toys should be stored in the vehicle until the child arrives at his or her destination.

- If the behavior of one or more of the children is inappropriate, the driver should not try to respond to the child while driving. Instead, he or she should stop the vehicle at the side of the road.

- Many times children with impaired hearing suffer from spatial disorientation when riding in a moving vehicle near an open window. It may be useful to seat this child in an inside seat close to the front of the vehicle. Similar recommendations can also apply to a blind child. If a visually impaired child is seated on the aisle, there should be an arm rest or rail to secure him/her.

- Children who are going through temporary or prolonged emotional crisis may be helped by being put in the front seat near the driver to increase the driver's influence over his/her behavior.

Special Trips/Field Trips. Special trips present drivers with special circumstances. First of all, they may be traveling over an unfamiliar route, or transporting children who may not ordinarily ride with them. There may be extra equipment and supplies to load, stow safely in the bus, and unload. Drivers may be sharing responsibility with volunteers who are themselves in a new situation. Finally, the children may be overexcited or overtired from a novel or long trip, or may be frightened because they are going to an unfamiliar place, for example, a doctor or dentist's office.

The following suggestions will help drivers transport children safely during special trips:

- If the destination is known in advance, review the route mentally or with a map if the distance is great, or practice the route if time and the availability of the vehicle make that possible.
- Make sure that you have an authorization and/or list for every child and adult who will be riding on the bus, in the form of a permission slip for each child and/or a trip sheet which authorizes the travel.
- Make sure that there is clear definition and agreement between the driver and other adults riding the bus about who is responsible for responding to discipline issues with the children: parent volunteers, staff, or bus driver. Make sure that the children are told before starting out which adult is responsible for them, to minimize confusion for them.
- Make sure that all passengers on the bus know what time they are supposed to return to the vehicle. If more than one vehicle is involved in the trip, it should be clear that all passengers know which vehicle they are to ride for the return trip.
- On field trips, make sure that no child enters the bus alone or plays on the bus while the others are visiting the site.
- Use a trip sheet to record destination, mileage, times of departure and return, and a list of passengers. For large field trips, the latter is particularly important.

Route and Passenger Information

The more knowledgeable and familiar a bus driver is with the requirements of driving the route, the greater the likelihood that the trip will be made safely. Similarly, if basic information about the children on the route is available to the drivers, they will be able to perform their job with confidence in their ability. Many programs keep a clipboard or notebook in the bus containing some or all of the following information:

- A map of the bus route with estimated mileages and running times, clocked at the actual hours of operation along with the names and addresses of the children on the route.

- An information/emergency card or sheet for each child who regularly rides the bus, which includes not only information about the parents' locations, but also about other authorized caretakers and emergency contacts. Information about medical data and special needs is also valuable to include, along with insurance numbers and parent authorizations for emergency medical treatments. The Rescue Litchfield County Head Start in Connecticut finds it helpful to attach to the card a photo of the child to help regular and substitute drivers get to know and/or identify children on the bus. The back and front of the card that Rescue Head Start uses is shown below; it is a good example of the kind of information useful to include.

- Specific information about children with special needs so they can be transported as comfortably and safely as possible. Information on this sheet should include a brief description of the nature of the child's condition, typical behavior patterns, and the indicators meaning that the child needs first aid or medical attention (for example, petit mal seizures, insulin shock, or diabetic coma). In addition, the driver should know how to best meet the child's daily needs, such as the amount of assistance needed to get on and off the vehicle and procedures for loading or unloading special equipment or aids.

- Phone numbers of local police station, fire department, hospital, and ambulance service. This information should be clear enough to be used by another person who may be summoning help at the time of an accident. The number of the local center and the name of a contact person there should also be included.

- Copies of all transportation rules and procedures provided for parents, including a form for registering any complaints about the transportation system, so that drivers will be aware of the program's policies and be able to reinforce them. For example, the driver should have a copy of the procedures a parent must follow if a child will not attend school on a particular day.

- If bus drivers are expected to provide information to parents about events at the center, telephone numbers for reaching staff, etc., this data should be included in the notebook or clipboard.

child's picture

RESCUE LITCHFIELD COUNTY HEAD START PROGRAM

EMERGENCY CARD

Name _____ Address _____ Date of Birth _____ Phone _____

Mother _____ Work _____ Phone _____

Father _____ Work _____ Phone _____

Persons, other than parents, to notify in case of emergency:

	NAME	ADDRESS	RELATIONSHIP	PHONE
1)				
2)				
3)				

I authorize my child to be released to the following people: (must be 16 years or older)

	NAME	ADDRESS	RELATIONSHIP	PHONE
1)				
2)				
3)				

Doctor _____ Address _____ Phone _____

Dentist _____ Address _____ Phone _____

Immunizations/Last DPT _____

Medical Data/Special Needs _____

Allergies _____ Current Medication _____

Medicaid No. or Insurance No. _____

(HF-3)
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PARENT AUTHORIZATIONS

Check (✓) below for any of the following items for which you give permission. Write "NO" for any item for which permission is not given. Assure that each item is clearly explained and understood before giving permission.

(1)____ AUTHORIZATION FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT: If required, I hereby authorize the Head Start Teacher and/or Staff to get medical aid for my child _____ (child's full name) from my child's physician, hospital emergency room staff, emergency medical technicians, or the Center's physician if they are unable to contact me or other legal guardian. My hospital of choice is _____. I understand that, if required, the nearest hospital able to provide the needed emergency service will be used.

I authorize the emergency doctor (and whomever he/she may designate as his/her assistants) to perform necessary emergency treatment and/or procedures as they deem therapeutically necessary. I understand that Head Start will make every attempt to contact me in case of emergency and that when reached, my presence with my child is necessary.

(2)____ I authorize Head Start Staff and Bus Drivers to administer basic first aid to my child in the classroom or in transit should injury occur.

(3)____ I give permission for my child to be transported by Head Start for any parent authorized health services. Advance notification of date is given parents.

(4)____ I give my child permission to take part in all RESCUE Head Start field trips, picnics, etc. Advance notification of date is given parent.

(5)____ I give permission for photo releases of my child relating to the Head Start Program.

I hereby certify that I have read and fully understand the above authorizations.

_____ _____
(Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian) (Date)

_____ _____
(Signature of Witness) (Date)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Even the best run transportation systems must be prepared for emergencies. Effective and safe responses will depend on several considerations:

- The driver must be well-versed in steps to follow under various conditions.

- Staff at the center must have specific procedures to follow when informed of an emergency--to notify parents, to provide a program representative at the accident scene (if necessary), to provide alternative transportation for the children (if necessary), to assist parents in reaching emergency medical facilities (if needed).

- Parents and children should be involved in discussing the possibility of an accident, breakdown, or health emergency. Parents should be included in the planning of procedures whenever possible, and should receive information about the center's emergency procedures at the beginning of the year. Parents in turn must supply accurate information about their availability and whereabouts during the time when children are on the bus, particularly if the children are being met by other adults. Programs should consider developing emergency training for children, parents, and staff, so everyone will be aware of and support these procedures.

The following pages will provide programs with guidelines to follow in the event of vehicle breakdown, accidents, adverse driving conditions and health emergencies.

Accidents and Breakdowns

A well-trained driver will know in advance of an emergency the steps to take so that should an accident or breakdown occur, he or she will be able to act in a calm, reassuring, and competent way.

In the event of an accident or breakdown, the driver should first maneuver the bus to the right-hand side of the road, if at all possible. He or she should then turn off the ignition switch, take the keys out of the ignition, and set the brakes. It is important for the adults to remain calm, and reassure the children. Either the driver or another adult must stay with the children, and except in the circumstances described below, keep them on the bus. Help can be summoned by asking an aide or volunteer to go to the nearest phone, by using a CB, if the vehicle is equipped with one, or by waiting for a passerby to help.

Evacuating the Bus. In most cases, the children should remain on the bus, but there are exceptions to this rule:

- Fire, or Danger of Fire. A bus should be stopped and evacuated immediately if the engine or any other part of the bus is on fire. The children should be led to a place at least 100 feet from the bus, and remain there until all danger is past. If the bus is near an existing fire and unable to be moved, or near gasoline or other explosive materials, children should also be evacuated.

- Unsafe Position. In the event that a bus is stopped because of accident, mechanical failure, or poor road conditions, the driver must determine if it is safe for the children to remain in the vehicle. Children must leave the bus if the final stopping point is in the path of a train; if there is danger of collision (in normal conditions, the bus should be visible for a distance of 300 feet); or if the bus comes to rest near a body of water or a steep hill and is in danger of moving. In the last example, the driver must be certain that the manner in which the evacuation is carried out will not increase the likelihood of moving the bus.

If the bus must be evacuated, a bus monitor, aide, or volunteer is invaluable. The adults should quickly identify a spot to which children can be removed which is away from traffic and at least 200 feet from the vehicle. As children are removed from the vehicle, they should be carried, held firmly by the hand, or kept together with a "travel rope." Unless the danger of staying in the vehicle is so great that children must be evacuated with great speed (for instance if the vehicle is on fire), one adult should stay with the children in the vehicle while the other removes them to the safe spot. If there is no aide or volunteer present, the children will have to remain for brief intervals without an adult immediately by their side. If possible, enlist the help of a passerby to remain with the children until all are safely out of the vehicle.

Evaluating Injuries and (When Appropriate) Using First Aid. If any of the children are injured, the driver must summon professional medical help as quickly as possible. While waiting for help to arrive, the driver should remain encouraging and calm. It is important that drivers know that they are not trained to be paramedics, and for that reason the situation must be urgent for them to attempt treatment themselves.

At least three types of injuries require immediate action: a blocked air passage, severe bleeding, and shock. Driver training should include instruction in first aid procedures that are appropriate to preschool children. (For example, most people are familiar with the Heimlich Maneuver for aiding choking victims; however a different procedure should be used with preschool children under 50 pounds to avoid damage to their rib cages.)

Contacting the Center. The driver, aide, or passerby, should be prepared to furnish the local center with the following information:

- location of the accident;
- the names of any children with serious injuries, and information about the injuries;
- the ambulance service, if one was called;
- names of children with other injuries needing emergency room treatment;
- names and telephone numbers of children in the bus, so parents can be notified.

In the event that a passerby must make the telephone call for the driver, the information should be readily available on an emergency form. See Route and Passenger Section, p. 12.

At the Center. Staff people at the center must be trained in procedures to follow in the event of a breakdown or an accident. A designated staff person should take down the accident information and call parents to notify them of injuries and/or delays in getting the children home.

The center should have a plan to provide back-up transportation for any children who are uninjured and who can be taken directly home. For example, another bus might be sent out, or a staff person designated to use his or her car as emergency transportation. The local center should have a back-up plan that has more than one "layer," so that staff absences or the unavailability of other vehicles do not prevent the center from responding to an emergency.

The center should always be able to tell the driver or the person making the call what the response of the center will be in the event of an accident or breakdown, so that the driver will have clear expectations and will be able to deal more effectively with the children:

- Will the center send another staff person and vehicle to investigate and/or help at the scene and to take injured children to medical treatment?

- How will uninjured children be transported home?

Managing the Children While Waiting for Help. It is important for the driver to explain briefly and simply what is happening, and what the children are expected to do. The driver should be aware of the language skills and comprehension of the children; a child who has difficulty understanding the situation will need extra reassurance, and may need to be kept close to the driver.

Children need to be reassured that there is a plan of action, and that they will be taken care of. If the driver knows what will happen, he or she should share the information with the children in clear and reassuring language:

"As soon as a policeman comes and I finish talking to him/her, we will be able to leave."

"The center is going to send another bus to take everyone home. It will be here soon."

"We need to wait here until someone comes by and calls to tell the center that we need help."

Under nearly all conditions, the children will remain in the vehicle, and it is helpful and important to keep talking to them, singing songs, or providing them with toys or books. It can be useful to have a special kind of "emergency kit" in the vehicle that holds a selection of picture books or some small toys.

If the driver has to evacuate the vehicle, a "travel rope" is a useful accessory to have on hand as a means of keeping everyone together, especially in a high-speed or heavy traffic area.

Finally, the driver should remember that hugs never hurt! Warmth and reassurance are always needed, welcome, and helpful.

Calling the Police. Police should be summoned if:

- Injuries are more serious than bruises, scratches, or small cuts;
- another vehicle is involved;
- property and/or vehicle damage is more than $200. (This is not much damage, it is equivalent to a crumpled fender or smashed taillights.) If in doubt, always call the police or highway patrol.

The driver (or aide, monitor, or volunteer) should only discuss the facts of the accident with the investigating officer. They should not discuss the accident with other motorists. If another vehicle is involved, the bus driver should get the operator's name, address, driver's license number, and vehicle registration, and the name, address, and telephone number of his or her insurance company, and be prepared to provide the same information to the other party. Finally, the bus driver should get names, addresses, and license numbers (if appropriate) of any adult witnesses to the accident.

While the officer is investigating the accident, the driver should be patient and give clear, brief answers.

Following-up. As soon as possible after the accident, the central office of the program must be notified, and the following information provided:

- a description of the accident, including time, location, road and weather conditions, and any other pertinent data;
- passenger information: which children were taken by ambulance for treatment, and where they were treated; which children received first aid at the scene of the accident and what first aid procedures were used; which children were taken (and by whom) for emergency room treatment; and how and when uninjured children were transported home;
- current location and condition of the vehicle.

An accident report should be filed according to the requirements of the program's insurance company and state law.

Adverse Weather and Road Conditions

During the course of a school year, a bus driver will face a variety of hazardous weather and road conditions that demand alert and skillful action: icing of windshields and pavements, snow, sudden and heavy rains, mud, and fog. Drivers must always be prepared to adjust their driving to road and weather conditions.

A basic rule to follow is always to shift to a lower gear when driving under adverse conditions and drive well to the right-hand edge of the road. The driver should make turns slowly to minimize the use of brakes, and should avoid sudden stops by tapping the brake pedal lightly to slow the vehicle and signal to others that the vehicle is stopping.

In snow, fog, rain, or sleet, the driver should always use windshield wipers and defrosters and drive with headlights on low beam. Poor weather conditions not only change the condition of the road, they also decrease visibility, so drivers should also be especially alert for other vehicles entering from side roads, pedestrians crossing the street, and other obstacles such as potholes and patches of wet leaves.

To avoid getting stuck in snow, ice, mud or sand, the driver should try to keep the bus moving slowly and steadily forward in gear. If the wheels start to spin, he or she should let up slightly on the gas to allow the wheels to take hold. However, if the bus stops, the driver should not continue to spin the wheels in hopes of pulling out, as this will create a rut which will deepen rapidly. Instead, the driver should point the wheels straight ahead, and try "rocking" the bus by alternately putting it into reverse and low gear. If this is done gently and rhythmically so that the wheels don't spin, in many cases the bus will pull out of the rut. If not, material such as crushed stone, tree branches, pieces of timber, or burlap can be pushed down around the rear wheels to provide traction for the vehicles.

A good driver never takes the route for granted. Even though he or she is thoroughly familiar with the route, road conditions can change rapidly; potholes develop overnight, shoulders can become soft, slick spots develop, gravel loosens, or the grade washes away. Each day, conditions are different, and a responsible driver is always alert for any changes.

Illness and Mishaps

Accidents and breakdowns are, in most cases, infrequent occurrences. More often, bus drivers will be faced with the sort of daily mishaps that happen whenever small children are present: scrapes and scratches, upset stomachs, nosebleeds. Although few of these situations are life-threatening, they are at best distracting, and can, if not handled properly, lead to more serious problems. The following suggestions will help drivers, aides, and volunteers weather these situations.

First, to reduce the likelihood of illness on the bus, it helps to give parents clear guidelines for when to keep a child at home (for example, when the child has a fever or diarrhea, or has vomited within the past 24 hours).

Drivers should also have information about any child who suffers from a chronic condition, such as seizures or allergy to bee stings, and be briefed about appropriate emergency procedures by the program nurse before an episode occurs. These instructions will be tailored to the individual child and his or her specific condition.

If a difficult situation does arise while the bus is moving, the driver should bring the bus to a stop, out of traffic and well over to the right-hand side of the road. The driver should not try to investigate while still driving. If the driver must leave his or her seat to assess the problem, he or she should first set the brakes, and remove the keys from the ignition.

If a child has vomited or soiled him or herself, the driver (or aide/volunteer) should clean up as much as possible with a towel kept on the bus as part of the emergency equipment. A filled water bottle or thermos is also handy to help in cleaning up, as is a set of clothing--t-shirt and pants with an extra jacket in cold weather--large enough to fit any child on the bus. The child in question may feel safer and more comfortable sitting close to the driver for the rest of the trip. When the bus reaches its destination, the driver can turn the child over to the teacher or parent, and briefly describe the problem in non-judgmental language.

A nosebleed is another common mishap. It usually looks worse than it really is. (Pressure applied to the side of the nose that is affected will usually stop the bleeding.) But the blood may be very frightening, not only to the child who is bleeding, but also to the other children. A sensitive driver or/aide will reassure the children if they seem scared.

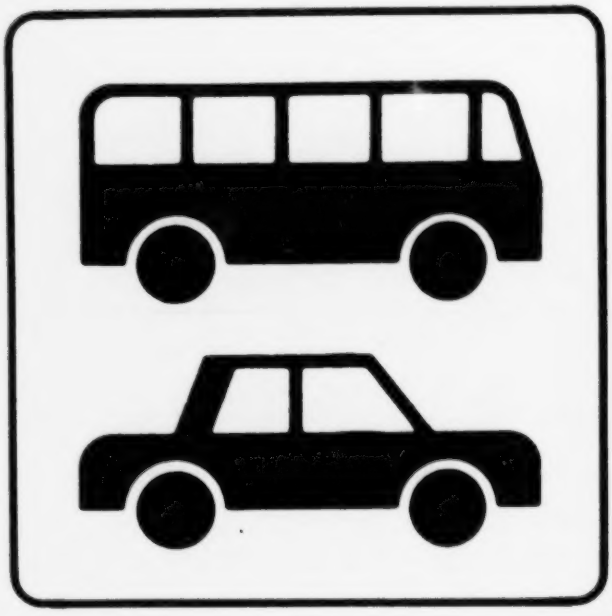
If a stinging insect gets in the bus, the driver should safely stop the vehicle as directed above and try to get rid of the insect. If a child gets stung (and is not allergic), the venom sac (stinger) should be removed if one is present-- bees leave stingers; wasps, hornets, and yellow jackets do not--and antiseptic applied to the area with gauze or cotton from the first aid kit. When the child reaches his or her destination, the bite can be washed with soap and water. If the child is allergic to stings, the driver should be briefed in advance on the best procedure to follow. (For example, people with severe reactions to insect bites often carry medication with them.) In some cases a young child may be allergic to stings but the family (and therefore the program) may be unaware of the problem, so the child should always be watched carefully for a reaction. The driver or aide should be concerned if the child has trouble breathing or suffers severe swelling anywhere on the body.

Situations like the ones described above may be messy and disruptive and also may be embarrassing for the child, whom other children may tease. The driver's reaction will set the tone for the other children; if he or she is sympathetic and matter-of-fact ("Anyone can get sick..."), the children will be more likely to take the incident in stride.

The driver should report each incident at the center so that follow-up care can be given and all the children reassured.

Any experienced driver will be able to add other examples of mishaps to this brief list. During training, it will be useful to share "war stories" and agree on the best ways to handle these situations. Preparation and rehearsal will allow drivers and aides to react in real-life circumstances with safety, sensitivity, and, above all, common sense.

Planning a Transportation System



In this section we will be looking at the people who make up the transportation system: what their roles and responsibilities are, and how they can work together to plan and operate a safe and efficient transportation system. Planning can make the difference between a clearly defined and smoothly run system, and one in which staff members, parents, and children are unclear about what is expected of them. Planning can also help people in a program understand not only their own jobs, but also their responsibilities to one another.

This manual makes two assumptions: that everyone in an early childhood program--not only the drivers but other staff members, parents, and children as well--has a contribution to make to the transportation effort; and that early childhood programs vary in size and staffing patterns. These factors will affect how specific job roles are defined. Therefore, instead of providing specific job descriptions, we have tried to identify tasks and raise questions that will help your program decide how to best meet your specific needs and circumstances.

DEFINING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To make any system work, every member must understand clearly what his or her responsibilities are, when they must be carried out, and what the performance requirements are. We have identified five different groups of people who contribute to the transportation system: the transportation manager; the bus driver; the monitor or transportation aide; other program staff such as teachers and social service workers; and parents. We will identify some of the responsibilities that each of these groups might have, and provide planning tools to help you design a system tailored to your own program.

The Transportation Manager

Role. The role of the transportation manager is essential; this person functions as the coordinator of the system and oversees its total operation.

In one program, the transportation manager may be the Program Director; in another, the tasks may be shared among staff members; in a third, there may be one person whose only job is to be responsible for the transportation system. No matter which of these models your program uses, it is essential that one person be designated to look at the transportation system as a whole and be responsible for reviewing how it functions.

Specific Responsibilities. The transportation manager will carry out some or all of the following tasks:

- develop the job descriptions for each member of the transportation system;
- develop a communication system along with other members of the program staff so that everyone in the program understands their responsibilities;
- develop or oversee the development of bus routes;
- coordinate the system on a day-to-day basis:
  - hire the bus drivers
  - select the monitors
  - administer and enforce the rules of the system
  - enlist and train substitute drivers to fill in when the regular driver is ill or absent
  - train the transportation staff
  - monitor and evaluate how well the system is working for staff, parents and children, for example, by designing a complaint procedure for parents and staff and riding the buses on a periodic basis to see how drivers are doing.

The Bus Driver

Role. The bus driver is, clearly, the heart of the transportation system. The bus driver may be the staff member seen most often by parents, and is the first and last staff person the children see on school days. The bus driver may be an important information resource about child and family events, day-to-day happenings, and conditions. The driver may be an important "goodwill ambassador" or message carrier for the program. In any case, the driver has three areas of responsibility which will exist in any program and which belong more to him/her than to anyone else. They are to:

- operate the vehicle safely;
- be able to relate effectively to the children he/she is transporting;
- respond reliably and effectively to any emergency situation.

Specific Responsibilities. Bus drivers will be required to carry out the following responsibilities:

- To operate the bus safely on the assigned route;
- To follow all program rules for conduct while operating the bus;
- To provide a positive, supportive environment for the children riding the bus;

- To communicate reliably with program staff and the children's parents;
- To be able to handle any emergency calmly and effectively;
- To maintain accurate records about the daily transportation of children, and the daily operation of the bus;
- To maintain accurate records on vehicle maintenance;
- To participate in all necessary training and planning meetings.

In order to carry out their responsibilities, bus drivers should have skills or training in these areas:

1. Traffic and safety laws
2. First aid and CPR
3. Daily maintenance checks
4. Record-keeping
5. Understanding child behavior
6. Constructive discipline
7. Safety drills on the bus
8. Defensive driving skills
9. Ability to do minor repairs and maintenance (e.g., oil change) if appropriate.

Selection. In a report published by the U. S. Department of Transportation (DOT) on Driver Selection and Training for Human Service Agencies, and sponsored by the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, the selection of bus drivers was identified as one of the most important factors in a good transportation system. The DOT has established several questions and criteria that will help programs select personnel who combine driving skills with an ability to work well with people. They are paraphrased below:

1. Can the applicant perform the job?

Does the applicant have a physical condition that might cause sudden loss of control over the vehicle? Dangerous conditions for drivers might include epilepsy, diabetes, angina pectoris (attacks of chest pain), high blood pressure, and chronic illness. People with these illnesses may hold a valid driver's license, but they are at a high risk for driving passenger-carrying vehicles.

Programs can screen for these conditions in two ways:

- The application blank should ask questions about these illnesses and the degree to which they are under control;

- The applicant should be required to have a physical examination which requires the physician to certify whether or not the driver is physically fit to drive a passenger vehicle.

Many of these conditions require medication which may interfere with driving. If so, does the individual understand the effect of the illness or drug and know how to compensate for this effect? Certification by the physician regarding necessary medication should also be required.

The presence of stress is another factor to consider: a person under extreme stress may be too distracted to perform the job satisfactorily. This is a difficult area to measure. Events such as the recent death of a family member, a pending divorce, or serious financial problems could all distress an individual so that reliability is affected.

One way to screen for such problems is to take the applicant for a road test and observe his or her reactions in frustrating situations like traffic jams, roadblocks, or bad weather conditions. It should be noted that everyone responds to stress differently. Many people are able to function well under stress; others need time to recover from disruptive life events.

2. Does the applicant understand and relate to the mission of the program and indicate a desire to work with young children and parents?

Personal interview and reference checks are the most effective ways to answer this question. Some general questions can help to determine the applicant's understanding of the requirements of the job. For example, you could ask "What are your reasons for applying for this job?" or "Why do you feel you would be a good driver in this program?" If the applicant answers that "they like to drive," you should explain that much of the job is related to non-driving activities like helping children in and out of the vehicle and communicating with staff and parents.

A good measure of the applicant's understanding of and empathy with the purpose of the agency is any prior volunteer work in your program or in any other program. Volunteer or paid work in any setting where helpfulness and caring are important and necessary qualities are good indicators of suitability for the job. Other related work includes hospital, church, school, or youth group experience or experience caring for children or other family members who are ill or have special needs. Ask for, and check, references from people who can evaluate an applicant's caring skills.

In many instances, it may be better to select a person who is a good driver and enjoys working with people rather than someone who has driven a truck without an accident for fifteen years, but shows no interest in helping people.

3. Does the applicant exhibit proven driving skills and a safe driving record?

As an absolute minimum, an applicant must be able to present a current driver's license and have four or five years of driving experience. Ideally

the applicant will have a year's experience driving the type of vehicle which will be used by the program, such as a van, station wagon, or bus. Statistics indicate that the accident rate is much higher during the first several months of driving a new type of vehicle. (A bus monitor or volunteer who has helped with field trips or substituted on the routes may be a good candidate.)

The transportation manager should also check the applicant's motor vehicle record with the appropriate state agency. There are several ways to get this information: develop your own form or find out if your state has a standard form. However you request information, you should include the applicant's name, address, date of birth, driver's license number, and social security number. Ask for the last three years of the applicant's driving record including moving violations and accidents.

An average driver is involved in one accident every twelve years and one moving violation every three years. Drivers with two or more accidents or convictions in a three year period have two and one-half times the accident frequency of drivers with clean records (The Travelers Insurance Companies, 1976).

As mentioned previously, a road test is an important part of the hiring process. For applicants who appear to meet all of the other criteria, the final requirement should be a test which approximates a typical bus run to evaluate an applicant's performance.

4. Does the applicant appear to be willing to be trained to perform the job well?

The most important element in assessing whether a staff member can benefit from training is motivation to grow. If an applicant has persistently been unwilling or unable to accept responsibility for mistakes and has a pattern of blaming others for things that go wrong, it is more unlikely that he/she will learn new ways of doing things. The applicant's willingness to acquire new skills can be discussed with his or her references.

5. Does the applicant have the emotional maturity and self-control necessary to perform the job?

Applicants who have a recent history of substance abuse, or disorderly conduct in the community will probably not be the best candidates for the position of bus driver in an early childhood program. Applicants who may have had an earlier history with these problems and who can demonstrate major change in behavior as a result of successful participation in a treatment program can be reliable employees. Similar patterns hold for applicants with police records.

Absence of a police record or a history of substance abuse does not, of course, guarantee emotional maturity. Some good indicators of maturity

include the applicant's general behavior, reliability, promptness, and ability to solve problems. Obviously it is very important to check recent character and employment references for all applicants.

The Bus Monitor

Role. The major function of the bus monitor is to assist the driver in making the bus ride a pleasant and safe one for the children. In emergencies the bus monitor can be invaluable to the driver. For example, the monitor might remain with the children while the driver summons help, or assist in evacuating the bus if necessary. An extra pair of adult hands can make a big difference!

Specific Responsibilities. Programs, and especially the transportation manager, must make decisions about the scope of responsibility assigned to the bus monitor. We have listed below some possible options and identified the training and compensation which may be necessary for each.

Tasks	Training	Compensation
Help children on and off the bus. Help with seat belts. Support the driver in maintaining bus rules. Occupy the children during the ride with appropriate songs/games.	Participate in workshops (with bus driver) on: • communications with children and discipline; • early childhood activities.	Volunteer or paid monitor.
Communicate with parents.	Participate in driver training on this topic.	Volunteer or paid monitor.
Act as substitute bus driver for daily runs.	Should have training listed in previous section.	Should be paid as a driver and be part of a list of substitutes developed by transportation manager.

Other Staff

Role. Other staff in Head Start, such as teachers and social service workers, also play a role in the transportation system. It is important for all staff to thoroughly understand the responsibilities as well as the

limits of the bus driver's role. Teachers, for example, might assume that bus drivers can tell a parent about an upcoming center event. Often bus drivers have many details to keep in mind and two or three messages to give to different families may be forgotten or confused. With a better understanding of the driver's responsibilities, a teacher might opt instead for written messages to parents.

Specific Responsibilities. There are many ways in which staff can be effective members of the transportation team. They can:

- Reinforce transportation policies and rules with parents;
- Train parents to support and extend their children's understanding of safe behavior on the bus;
- Teach children about transportation safety in classroom activities;
- Develop a bus driver's understanding of constructive ways to share useful information learned about children/families on the route (for example, involve bus drivers in staff meetings and/or case conferences);
- Share information at the end of the day with the bus driver about children's physical or emotional upsets so he/she can be prepared to be supportive during the ride home.

Moreover, other program staff can be effective in helping bus drivers improve their skills in communicating with parents and young children. Education staff can play an active role in bus driver training. They can offer drivers and monitors valuable information on discipline, limit-setting, and reinforcing rules with a preschooler. They can also help drivers understand and accept handicapping conditions. Similarly, social service component staff can help transportation staff develop a sensitivity to and understanding of critical issues such as cultural differences among families and the importance of confidentiality.

Staff, particularly in the education component, also have responsibility for providing children with answers to the following questions?

When and why do I ride the bus?

Will I ride the same bus every day?

What am I supposed to do on the bus?

What will happen to me if the bus has an accident?

Who is the driver of my bus?

Will I always have the same driver?

Why do I have to follow these rules?

Can I play on the bus?

In what ways? (Sing, talk to my friends?)

Parents

Role. It is essential that parents see themselves as partners in the transportation system. Parents can teach children at home about safety rules on the bus and about the importance of the driver and/or monitor. In addition, at the beginning of the school year parents should be provided with, and understand how to follow, the program's rules, policies, and procedures.

Specific Responsibilities. A parent's specific responsibilities will depend on the regulations established by each individual program. Use the following example of Parent Bus Rules as a guideline for the kind of information parents will need.

PARENT BUS RULES

1. Head Start children will be returned to the place they were picked up. If there is to be a change in pick-up or delivery, WRITTEN NOTICE must be given to the driver one day in advance.

2. Parents should notify the center when a child will not be attending class.

3. Parents should notify Head Start a week in advance of moving.

4. Children should be dressed and ready when the bus arrives. The driver will not go to the door. If the child misses the bus, it is the parent's responsibility to take the child to school.

5. When a child is delivered home, the parent or an adult should let the driver know there is someone to receive the child.

6. If no one is at home, the child will be returned to the center, and it will be the parent's responsibility to see that he or she is taken home. The child will not be picked up again until the parent confers with the Family Educator.

7. If a child has to cross the street to get on or off the bus, he or she must be accompanied by an adult. The child must cross in front of the bus.

8. Only Head Start children, volunteers, and volunteer's children will ride the bus to and from the center.

9. There is no food, drink or smoking on the bus.

10. Toys should not be sent with the child.

11. There will be two adults on the bus at all times.

12. All bus passengers wear seat belts.

13. Parents who transport their child to Head Start must accompany the child into the building. Children must not arrive at school more than 15 minutes before class begins.

14. The bus driver may determine if a child is ill at the time he or she boards the bus. A sick child will be returned to the parent(s).

ESTABLISHING AND COMMUNICATING POLICIES

Policies have been defined as "standing answers to recurrent questions." In the following worksheets we have identified recurrent questions that arise around transportation procedures. Your answers to these questions become your program's transportation policies. (You will no doubt think of other questions, and there is space to add them on each worksheet.)

Questions and responses imply communication among all the people with roles and responsibilities in the system. How, when, and by whom policies are communicated is crucial to an effectively run program. The right-hand column on the worksheets will help you establish clear lines of communication.

The transportation manager should take lead responsibility for coordinating the development and review of all transportation policies, with the assistance of the program director, component coordinators, and the parent policy council.

The worksheets that follow are organized according to questions likely to be asked by drivers, staff, and parents. (A policy can cover more than one question.)

What should the parent do if:	Policy	Who should be told?	When?	How?
Child will be absent? There is a change in pick-up or drop off? Child is not feeling well? The bus is late (in the a.m.; in the p.m.)? He or she needs to send a message to center? He or she has a complaint about transportation service? Other:_____ _____ _____				

How will the parent receive information on:	Policy	Who should be told?	When?	How?
Basic rules? Schedule? Driver's name? Emergency procedures? Other:_____ _____ _____				

What should the driver do if:	Policy	Who should be told?	When?	How?
The child is unusually difficult to manage while on the bus?				
Children shun one child while on the bus?				
Parent gives him or her information about child?				
He or she observes that child is unwell or upset, or notices significant behavior changes in child?				
He or she observes difficult interaction between parent and child?				
He or she notices that parent appears upset?				
Parent remarks that child is not enjoying school?				
Parent asks questions about the child or the program?				
Parent fails to follow transportation rules?				
There is an accident or breakdown on the route?				
Other:_____				
_____				
_____				

What should a center staff member do if:	Policy	Who should be told?	When?	How?
Child appears unwell during the day?				
Child exhibits unusual behavior during the day?				
Child appears upset and unhappy during the day?				
He or she receives a complaint about the bus driver from parent or child?				
He or she has a message for parents about meetings, workshops, etc.?				
The bus is late arriving at the center?				
He or she wants to arrange transportation for a field trip?				
He or she wants transportation for a child to go to medical center, dentist, etc.?				
He or she has specific useful information about a child's handicapping condition?				
Other:_____				
_____				
_____				

SUMMARY

When your program has completed its planning/review process, you should have in writing the following documents:

Job descriptions for bus driver and bus monitor

Daily operating rules and procedures for bus driver and monitor, which include

1. rules for picking up and delivering children and for driving the route;

2. emergency procedures;

3. rules and procedures for giving/receiving information from parents;

4. rules and procedures for giving/receiving information to and from staff about children, parents, and program activities.

Daily operating rules and procedures for center staff which include

1. rules and procedures for giving information to driver and monitor about children;

2. rules and procedures for giving information to driver and monitor for parents;

3. rules and procedures for helping driver to load/unload children in the bus.

Bus rules and information for parents which will include

1. bus driver's name;

2. bus route schedule;

3. procedure for notifying program if child will not attend;

4. parent responsibilities for pick-up and drop-off and consequences if these are not met;

5. guidelines for what information about the child and/or family may be given to the bus driver and what information must be given directly to the center;

6. a parent's right to file a complaint and the procedure for doing so;

7. program's emergency procedures if there is an accident or breakdown (Who can the parent call? Will the parent be notified and by whom?);

8. behavior that is expected from the child on the bus.

Bus rules and information for children which will include

1. what is expected from them on the bus and why;

2. what to do in an emergency (accident or breakdown).

Training Activities

STRATEGIES FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

In this section we are providing a sample of strategies and activities that you can use in your transportation training. The first and second activities provide bus drivers and monitors with information about child development and practice in developing effective strategies for communicating with small children. The third activity is a bus safety drill for children, in which teachers, drivers and parents also participate. The fourth includes activities that teachers and parents can use with children and the fifth provides adult-to-adult communication skills exercises.

Training provides three kinds of support to your transportation planning and implementation: 1) it provides you with an opportunity to identify the kinds of skills and understanding needed by the transportation team: drivers, staff, parents, and children alike; 2) it clarifies for everyone what the specific expectations are for carrying out their responsibilities and 3) it gives the system managers and the team an opportunity to "try out" new skills or knowledge in a less pressured setting before using them on a day-to-day basis.

Who should be part of your training effort? In previous sections, we have stressed that transportation is a team effort. All of the people in the team should have access to some part of your training. Drivers and monitors will of course be the most extensively involved; but education, social service, and health staff need to contribute to the planning and delivery of training and also learn about their own responsibilities. Children and parents need to know about their part in the system.

We suggest that the following steps will help you plan effective training for your transportation system:

- Needs Assessment - This is the process by which you identify the specific needs for training of your own staff members, parents, and children. Some of the questions that might be helpful to you in thinking about and identifying training needs are:

  - What proportion of your bus drivers are or will be new at the beginning of the year?

  - Do drivers and monitors, in the way they do their jobs, appear to understand what is expected of them?

  - Think about each driver and monitor. In what area(s) of their jobs do they seem to need improvement?

  - As a group, does the need for improvement cluster in certain areas, for example, dealing effectively with children, relating well with parents, sharing information with staff?

- If your program has had complaints from parents or other staff about the transportation system, have the complaints clustered around certain kinds of concerns, rather than on isolated incidents or specific drivers?

- Are you planning to make some changes in the operation of your transportation system or its policies? (A new type of vehicle? new staffing arrangements? new routes? new rules?) How will these be introduced to members of staff, parents, and children?

- Does everyone in your program, including parents and children, understand your program's emergency procedures?

- Do drivers and monitors understand how to use and share information with other staff members?

- Using Available Staff for Training - As you do your needs assessment, you will discover the strengths of your staff and program as well as the needs for improvement. You may want to use some of those strengths in providing training. For example, education staff members can provide training on child development or understanding children's behavior. Family service staff can be helpful in promoting understanding of family needs and how these needs might affect a parent's behavior toward program staff members as well as toward their own children. Parents, experienced drivers, and monitors are also good resource people.

- Implementing Training - Training is most useful when it corresponds to the natural cycle of events that arise during the year.

Program Year Events	Transportation System Planning	Transportation Training
Evaluation.	Evaluate successes and needs for improvement of transportation staff.	Plan transportation training for continuing staff.
Staff recruitment.	Evaluate training needs of new transportation staff.	Plan training for new staff.
Orientation and pre-service activities.		Training/orientation for staff. Training for bus drivers and monitors. Sessions for other staff.
Introductory parent meetings.		Orientation to bus rules and safety activities for children.
		Bus safety drill.
Staff meetings		
In-service training days		Follow-up activities.
Parent meetings		
	Mid-year evaluation of transportation system.	Training to respond to problem areas.

- Evaluation - Training must be evaluated by both trainers and participants to determine whether it serves the purpose for which it was intended. Such evaluation can be a very simple process for the participants: at the end of a session they can be asked to evaluate the training content, the timing and structure of the session, and how comfortable or difficult the training experience was for them. Because this information can be extremely helpful to the trainer, we are including a sample evaluation form:

Participant Evaluation Form

Topic:_____
Date:_____
Your Position_____

1. What was most useful to you in today's training session?

2. What would you like to learn more about?

3. Was there any part of the training that was not appropriate or helpful? If so, what?

4. Were you satisfied with the extent of your own participation in the session?

5. Was today's presentation clear and well-organized?

6. Do you feel training sessions should be

Shorter_____	longer_____	the same_____
more frequent_____	less frequent_____	the same_____
for a larger group_____	for a smaller group____	the same_____
earlier in the day_____	later in the day_____	the same_____

7. Were the physical arrangements comfortable? What did you like or dislike?

8. Do you have any suggestions for future training?

Activity 1: Understanding Children's Feelings

Purpose:

Adults sometimes misunderstand children's behavior. We sometimes believe that a child has more control than he or she really has, or is willfully misbehaving when in fact he or she does not understand what is expected. The following activity is intended to help adults think about why children behave in certain ways.

What you will need:

- A reasonably quiet room, with an adult-sized chair available for each participant. Recommended group size for this exercise is 8-16. There should be enough room for participants to shift their chairs easily and work in pairs.

- Copies of the handout, "The Child's Point of View."

Outline of the activity:

I. Introduce the activity by saying, "Sometimes adults see a child behaving in a certain way and assume they know the reason for the behavior. But sometimes we can be mistaken. Today, we want to look at some ways that we can gain insight into children's behavior. Let's start by trying to remember some experiences that we may have had when we were children. Can you remember a time when you behaved in a certain way and an adult misunderstood you? Maybe a time when you made a mistake and someone thought you did it to be mean or bad? Or an occasion when you did something naughty because you were tired or upset. Take some time to think of an example."

(Allow a few minutes. Then ask if anyone is ready to share his or her memory. If some people seem reluctant, or have difficulty remembering, come prepared with an example of your own.)

II. Have some members of the group tell their stories and then ask them to think about how they felt. Use the following discussion questions. (Allow 15-20 minutes.)

- What did the adult say to you?
  Was it a parent? A teacher? A relative? A stranger?

- What did the adult do? Were you punished? How?

- How did you feel? Did you feel misunderstood or unfairly treated?
  How long did your feelings last?
  (Take note of the fact that you still remember the incident.)

III. Pass out copies of the handout, "The Child's Point of View." Then continue the session by saying, "Now let's stop and think about how we can use what we remember about our feelings when we were children to see how we can be more helpful adults." (Ask members of the group to sit together in pairs; if the group is large, you can form groups of three.) Think about how you would have responded if you were the adult in your partner's childhood story, and your partner will do the same. You can help each other by retelling your stories. Try to come up with the answers to these questions:

- Why do you think your partner (as a child) did what he or she did?
- What would you want to do and say to help that child? Try out your answers on your partner. Would your approach make him or her feel better? (This step should take 10-15 minutes.)

IV. Reconvene the group and ask each pair to share their ideas. The leader can ask for comments about what makes these approaches different. Help participants understand a child's need for self-esteem by asking them to empathize with past feelings of shame, embarrassment, etc. You can also help them be more aware of a child's need for a sense of fairness, of being listened to and understood. (10-20 minutes)

Extensions of the activity:

As a follow-up to this discussion, you can ask participants to spend some time observing children and adults, not only in the classroom, but in supermarkets, on buses or trains, or in their neighborhoods. Plan a follow-up discussion on their observations, using the same themes emphasized in the activity.

HANDOUT

The Child's Point of View:
What I Need to Feel --

ACCEPTED

Whether I am dark or light, blue-eyed or brown, and whatever language I speak, I need to know that you see me as a person.

RECOGNIZED AND PRAISED

I need to know that you see me trying to do what is expected of me, even if I can't do exactly what you want yet.

RESPECTED

I need to understand why you want me to do something.
I need to know that you won't shame me in front of others if I make a mistake or do something wrong.
I need to know if you give me a choice, you will really let me choose.

HELPED TO BE COMPETENT

I need to know that you will help me to understand what I am supposed to do.

Activity 2: Discipline on the Bus

Purpose:

Sometimes it can be difficult for adults to be aware of specific reasons and strategies for influencing or responding to children's behavior, particularly in a situation where they must use authority. In this activity we can help drivers and monitors to think about the impact and effectiveness of various approaches to children's behavior on the bus.

Note: This activity should follow the previous activity, "Understanding Feelings."

What you will need:

- A comfortable room with adult-size chairs. You may want to have a blackboard to record ideas listed during the group discussion. (Easel pad or sheets of paper taped to the wall area are equally good.)
- Copies of Case #1 and Case #2 for each participant.
- Copies of the situation cards so that you will have one per participant.
- Copies of the handout sheet, "Positive Approaches to Discipline." Participants should have their own pencils and paper or additional sheets of writing paper should be provided.

Outline of the activity:

I. Introduce the activity by passing out the handout, "Some Positive Approaches to Discipline." Ask participants to take a few minutes to look it over.

Ask participants to think about how these rules relate to the experiences they discussed in the previous activity. Can they think of ways that the use of one of these approaches by the adult in their life might have made a difference? (Allow 5-10 minutes)

Continue by explaining, "Now we are going to look at a typical incident in a bus driver's or monitor's experience. In fact, something like this may already have happened to one of you. Please read the description of this incident and then we will talk about it. Please think as you are reading about what you like and don't like about the way this bus driver handled the incident."

Distribute Case #1. Give participants 5 minutes to read it and think. Then begin the discussion, using the discussion questions at the bottom of the handout. Try to get the participants to summarize their reactions. Put words or phrases from their comments up on the sheets of paper (or blackboard). For Case #1 you will probably get comments that focus on the negative experience for the child--the shaming and the lack of support.

Questions 1-5 can be reviewed in about 10 minutes. You will want to spend more time on questions 6-8. With these questions, ask participants to try out actual sentences that they would use with the child, the mother, and the teacher. Record their responses or ask a volunteer to record them. This segment of the activity will take 20 to 30 minutes.

II. "Now let's look at another case. This one may also sound familiar to you. Please take time to read and review it. Again, think about what you like and dislike about the way in which the driver handled the situation."

Distribute Case #2. Give participants 5 minutes to read it. Using the discussion questions at the bottom of the handout, get group reactions to Case #2. Again, write words and phrases on the sheets. This would take about 10 minutes.

"Now let's look at the similarities and differences between your reactions to Case #2. What do you notice?"

Participants will probably note that reactions to Case #2 are more favorable. You may want to pinpoint more specific differences that relate to the ways that Case #1 was destructive of the child's self-esteem and Case #2 was supportive of it. (Also mention the issues of respect for the child.)

Again, ask participants to frame word-for-word sentences rather than just describing what they think they would say. You can record them, or they can write them on the sheets to share with the group.

Ask participants to respond to the statements, using the criteria established in the Approaches to "Approaches to Discipline" and the "I Can" handouts.

III. Introduce this section by saying, "Now you will be asked to think about how you would deal with other situations that might come up with children in the bus. Please take a situation card. Think about it. Think about exactly what you might want to say and do."

There are several variations you can use in asking participants to work with the situation cards.

- You can ask all of the people who have card no. 1 to work together; all of the people with card no. 2 to work together, etc.

- You can have participants try out several cards by doing one and then swapping with another participant to get another. After the third swap, you should bring the group together to discuss their ideas.

- You can divide participants into groups of three or six, and have them review each of the situations among themselves while you circulate from group to group.

HANDOUT

Some Positive Approaches to Discipline

Here are some strategies for helping children behave positively so that trouble is reduced. In many situations, you can create conditions that will help stop trouble before it starts.

1. Let children know what you expect from them.

   Not - "Be good now!"

   Instead - "I'd like you to keep your seat belts on and sit up in your seats when we are driving."

2. Praise children for showing the behavior you asked for. Reward them by smiling at them and thanking them for their cooperative behavior.

   "Well, Tommy and Lisa, you are sitting up just as I asked. Thank you."

3. Give a child a choice only if there really is one.

   Not - "Would you like to get on the bus now?"

   Instead - "The bus is here and it's time to go home."

4. Let children know that a transition is coming.

   "Bobby, your house is the next stop. We'll be there soon."

5. Avoid having unnecessary rules.

   Not - "Keep your hands in your laps at all times."

   Instead - only ask for what is really important: extra rules make it harder for children to do what is expected of them.

6. Make some changes to help a child behave.

   "Johnny, you keep opening your seat belt. You'll have to sit here next to me. That way, I can make sure you keep it on."

7. Be sure to notice good behavior, especially from a child who is frequently difficult.

   "Hector, you have followed all the bus rules so well today. I am really proud of you."

8. If you see trouble brewing, step in <u>before</u> the crisis happens.

   "Lana and Harry, you two have been fussing at each other. I'm going to put you in different seats."

9. Rely only on what <u>you</u> see as evidence. Children can get carried away with "telling on" each other.

10. Try as hard as you can to control your own feelings. The children are depending on you to help them with <u>their</u> self-control. However, you can certainly acknowledge your own feelings in responding to them.

    "Ruth, I really feel angry when I see you hit Bonnie like that."

11. Let the punishment fit the crime. Taking toys away is appropriate when they are misused, but not as a response to everything.

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I Can
Simplified Language Competence Chart

When I am two and one-half I can:

recognize familiar sounds

speak sentences of 2-3 words

sing short songs

When I am three I can:

use complete sentences some of the time

can understand and use:

verbs: go, come
pronouns: he, me, you, your, my, our
prepositions: in, out, up, down, here, there
adjectives: big, little

can locate the sources of sounds

When I am four I can:

carry out a sequence of 2 directions: "Step into the bus. Now sit down."

can talk about my own experiences in a connected way

Situations That May Affect
A Child's Use of Language

1. The child may be trying to adjust to a new experience:

   separating from a parent
   riding on the bus for the first several times
   meeting new children
   meeting a new adult.

2. The child may be getting sick or recovering from a recent illness.
3. The child may not speak clearly and therefore not be easily understood.
4. The child may talk very softly and not be easily heard.
5. The child may have a hearing difficulty which makes it difficult to understand what is being said to him or her.

Case #1

A new child has been added to the route. When the bus pulls up, the driver says to the child, "Come on, let's go. Everybody's waiting for you." The boy turns his face away and leans against his mother. She looks down at him and says, "What's the matter? I thought you wanted to go to school. Go ahead!" The boy stands stiffly next to his mother. One hand reaches out and grabs her skirt. His mother pushes him a little and urges, "Go on, now. You're going to school." She pulls her skirt away from him.

The driver stays seated in the bus, and calls to the child. "Come on. We have to get going. Are you going to be a big boy or a baby today? We only take big boys to school. Come on, I can't wait for you."

Finally, the mother reaches down, picks the child up, and puts him in the bus. He sits, crying as the bus pulls away. His crying gets louder. The driver says, "Boy, you really are a baby. You're going to have to grow up if you want to ride on my bus. I don't let babies ride with me."

The child cries most of the way to the center. The other children stare at him. By the time the bus gets to the center, the child is sniffing quietly. The driver takes the children to the teacher. She asks the child why he is crying. He says nothing.

- -

Case #2

It is the end of the day. The driver has loaded everyone onto the bus. As the driver swings out on to the road, one of the children, a little girl, is looking all around. When the driver makes the first stop, and one of the children gets out, the driver calls, "Don't forget your picture. Show it to your mother." The little girl shrieks, "My picture's gone! Jerry took it!" Jerry calls from the sidewalk, "Uh, uh. That's mine. My name's on it." He holds it up, and the driver can see "Jerry" written in what looks like the teacher's writing. The little girl is calling, "Gimme my picture, Jerry."

The driver turns to her. "That is <u>his</u> picture, Donna. It has his name on it. Where is your picture?" Donna continues to insist that Jerry has her picture.

The driver touches her shoulder and looks into her face. "I know how much you want to have your picture to take home, Donna. We have to go now to take you and everybody home. When I go back to the center, I will ask your teacher to look for it. We will save it for you."

Donna looks back at the driver and cries a little, but she stops calling. The driver pulls away from the stop and continues the route.

Discussion Questions for Case #1 and #2

1. What did you like or dislike about the way the driver handled this situation?

2. How do you imagine the child felt? Did he feel good about himself?

3. How do you think the mother felt?

4. What do you think was the most important fact in this situation?

5. What do you imagine might happen the next day when the child rides the bus?

6. What are some other things that the driver could have said to the child -

   when the bus first stopped?

   when the child didn't want to get on?

   after the child was on the bus?

7. Are there any ways that the driver could have worked with the mother to help the child?

8. Is there any information that the bus driver should or could have given to the teacher?

Situation Cards

Situation #1

What would you say?

What would you do?

Why?

One child hits another.

Situation #2

What would you say?

What would you do?

Why?

A child says he is sick to his stomach.

Situation #3

What would you say?

What would you do?

Why?

One child calls another child a bad name.

Situation #4

What would you say?

What would you do?

Why?

A child makes fun of another child's appearance.

Situation #5

What would you say?

What would you do?

Why?

One child always wants to sit back in the corner and doesn't talk to other children on the bus.

Situation #6

What would you say?

What would you do?

Why?

A child tells you his daddy is gone.

Activity 3: The Bus Safety Drill

Purpose:

This activity can help to meet four goals for the transportation system within your program:

- Everyone will be reassured by knowing that the program has an emergency procedure in place;
- Participating in the activity will promote the idea of membership in a team effort;
- Drivers, monitors, other staff, parents, and children will have a clear understanding of their roles in an emergency;
- The drill will enable you to see if the emergency plan needs modifications.

What you will need:

As a first step, the emergency plan itself must be put in writing, with specific information for each member of the team: the driver, monitor, staff at the center, parents, transportation manager. Parents should receive a copy of the emergency plan and be advised that their child will be practicing it at school.

Select someone who will coordinate this activity for each group involved. You may want to organize by component, letting the parent involvement staff work with parents, the education coordinator with teacher, the transportation manager with drivers and monitors. Another approach would be to have one coordinator for each center, such as the center director or head teacher. You will know what will be most effective for your program.

Have a meeting at which the appointed activity coordinators will review all of the steps for the activity, which are described below.

Outline of the activity:

I. Before trying the whole drill, it will probably be helpful to have the drivers practice the emergency drill with one another so they can feel sure of the procedures.

II. Teachers can go through the steps of the drill with the children in the classroom or outdoors in the playground. A very useful technique for making the drill more "real" to the children is to make a tape, chalk, or paint outline of the bus or van. You can obtain the dimensions of the vehicle and draw an outline to fit. Use chairs or draw circles for the seats, and mark the positions of the doors.

III. As soon as possible after you have gone over the activity with the children, invite the bus driver and monitor to come to the classroom to practice the drill with the children, using the "outline." It will be helpful if the children are doing the drill with their regular driver(s) and monitors. This may mean combining classrooms in some centers.

IV. Try the drill in the actual vehicle with the driver and the children. At this point, the teacher should work toward becoming a spectator so the transportation staff and children are working together on their own.

V. Since the parents have already been informed that the children have been practicing the emergency drill, and have received copies of the emergency procedure, you may want to invite them to the center to watch the end result of all of the practice. Use a real vehicle outdoors, and let the parents watch, with lots of praise afterward for the children. You may want to celebrate with a small field trip or reward the children with I AM A SAFE RIDER badges made by the program or by the parents for the children.

Bus Drill Outline

The same steps can be used both indoors and outdoors.

To children:

1. "You know how we get on the bus, don't you? Let's show how we do it. Let's get ready to go to the bus, children (follow the procedure used in your program). Now climb in, one by one (help them do it) and now sit down. What do we do now?" (Safety Belts)

2. "Now, what happens?" (Driver pantomines closing the door or doors.) Wait for response from children. "Then I start the engine, and the bus leaves. What do we do first?" Ask for answers from children. (We go to Susie's house, etc.)

3. "What happens when I stop the bus?" Review the normal procedures. (Bus pulls over, child is helped out, adult is waiting, etc.) This is a good time to help children understand the use of the flashers on the bus. Explain that the flasher is a signal that helps them get on and off the bus safely. Repeat this step several times so children become familiar with it. "Who gets off the bus next? Now, who is next?, etc."

4. Introduce the idea that sometimes the bus may have to stop for other reasons. You can review with the children what those might be (see if they can remember from the route) for example, stop signs, railroad tracks, construction. Drivers can help teachers make a list of specific landmarks along the route, so that children can remember more easily.

5. "Sometimes there can be other reasons why the bus might have to stop. The bus might have a problem and have to stop. Most of the time when that happens, you will all be able to wait together in the bus with (driver's name) and (monitor's name). Then you might talk or sing songs or play games until the center sends another bus to pick you up. Do you know a song we might sing on the bus?" Children may name one or more. You may want to take time to sing one song.

6. "Sometimes if the bus has a problem and has to stop, we can keep you safer if we help you all to get out of the bus very quickly and move you to a safe place where you can wait for another bus." (Depending on the locations of your routes, you can suggest the kinds of places where the children might wait safely.)

   "Today we are going to show what that will be like, so if you ever need to do it, you will know how. First we will try it together."

   The basic instructions for evacuating the bus are as follows:

   - Children should stay in their seats until an adult helps them out of the bus.

- Children should understand that sometimes the driver may need to hold their hand; and at other times the driver may need to pick them up to carry them away from the bus quickly.

- Finally, the children must know to stay together in the spot where the driver brings them. You can suggest to the children that they can help by watching out for each other in the "safety spot" so that the driver can go to remove the other children.

7. "Now we will try it with driver and monitor. Are you ready? Does everyone know what to do?"

Activity 4: Suggestions for Teachers and Parents to Use with Children

CLASSROOM

Bus Play in the Dramatic Play Area

(Leave props in the dramatic play area that will encourage children to play 'bus driver' or bus safety games. Miniature traffic signs are excellent; they can be easily made out of cardboard and dowels (a nice project for the children). Include props for the driver--for example, a hat or a badge that says "bus driver," seat belts, steering wheel, horn.

If children want to act out a bus ride, you can support and extend the activity by asking questions like, "Who rides on the bus with you?" "Do you see a_____on the way to school?" (Use obvious landmarks like stores, movie theaters, big trees, bodies of water, tall buildings, etc.)

"Simon Says" for Safety

Use chairs as bus seats, and get seat belts from a junk yard or salvage.

Bus Driver Says:

"Seat belts on!"
"Seat belts off!"

Use "Bus Driver Says" for:

stopping at stop lights;
stopping at railroad tracks;
getting off and on the bus;

The Bus Ride Game

You can use the chairs and simulated seat belts for this game too. To get on the bus, the child must name something seen on the route or remember a bus rule. When everyone is "on," children could play a clapping game or sing a bus song:

Bus Song: "The Wheels on the Bus"

The wheels on the bus go round and round,
Round and round, round and round,
Oh, the wheels on the bus go round and round,
All through the town.

Suggestions for additional verses (other than the ones you already know).

The mother at the house says, "Goodbye, child,
Goodbye, child, Goodbye, child,"
The mother at the house says, "Goodbye, child,"
When I go to school.

(Or try daddy, father, uncle, auntie, grandma, sister.)

The mother at the house says, "Hello, dear,
Hello, dear, Hello dear"
The mother at the house says, "Hello, dear,
Welcome home again."

The teacher at my school says "Hi there, (name of child)
Hi there,_____, Hi there,_____,"
The teacher at my school says "Hi there,_____
I'm glad to see you here."

The seat belts on the bus go click, click, click
Click, click, click, click, click, click
The seat belts on the bus go click, click, click
to keep me safe and sound.

You will probably want to make up some of your own.

Bus Ride Lotto

You may want to take photographs of landmarks in your area that the children see on their bus routes, and mount them on sturdy cardboard for lotto cards. You could also use photos of high visible traffic and/or road signs, such as Stop, Yield, or R/R crossing. The children might also enjoy photos of the bus drivers and monitors.

HOME

Parent Workshop

Teachers might provide a brief workshop for parents to help them prepare their children for riding the bus and teach them about safety. The workshop could also include ideas for getting children ready in the morning, stressing, for example, how long it takes children to wake up and how much help small children need to get ready, greeting them after school, and dealing with those times when children balk at leaving home.

You might consider using a bus to get parents to the workshop, so they become familiar with the bus routine and rules.

The Child Transportation Card

Each parent should receive a Child Transportation Card (see sample below) when they get other transportation information or at a brief workshop like the one described above. Parents can go over the card with their children to reinforce the rules, and then post it where the child can see it.

Child's Transportation Card

My bus driver's name is_____.

The bus will come to my house at_____in the morning.

(Parents: What happens at your house that will help your child remember when the bus is coming? For example, the bus arrives just when a favorite TV show ends, right after an older brother or sister goes to school or work, or just before a baby gets fed. Young children remember events by sequence because they don't yet understand "clock" time.)

The bus will bring me home at_____time.

(Parents: Your child will know when to get off the bus by remembering who gets off just before your stop.)

The names of other children on the bus with me are_____,_____

_____,_____and_____. (List special friends if the vehicle is large.)

There are rules I am supposed to follow on the bus to help keep me safe:

I wear my seat belt all the time.

I don't eat on the bus.

The driver or the monitor will keep my toys or my projects from school in a special place on the bus until it is time for me to get off at the center or at home.

Other rules_____

_____

_____

If you have questions about my bus or you need to tell the center that I am sick, you should call_____,_____at_____.
(name) (telephone)

Sometimes we sing or play games on the bus. Here are the words to one of our songs:

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Activity 5: Adult to Adult Communication Skills

No matter how well-planned any transportation system is, rough spots can arise among people who make up the system--for example, between drivers and monitors, drivers and other staff, or drivers and parents. These problems may include differences of opinion about rules, limits and expectations. The exercises below will help improve basic communication skills. The ideas are drawn from a book by Robert Bolton, People Skills, which you may want to obtain and use as a resource book for your program.

Purpose

To help adults develop communication skills that will help them deal more comfortably with one another in problem situations.

What you will need

- A quiet room big enough for everyone to sit comfortably. The group should be limited to fifteen people so that everyone will be able to participate in the discussion. Make sure that parents or other staff members will not have to walk through during the discussion. Communication is a topic that will be a sensitive one for some members of your group, and interruptions can be disturbing.
- A blackboard, or an easel pad, or some large sheets of paper to tape on the wall.
- Pencil and paper for each of the members of the group.
- Copies of the cases to hand out to all of the participants.

Outline of the Activity

Open the activity by saying, "Today we are going to look at some ways that feel more effective in communicating with people in difficult or frustrating situations. Each of us, no matter how well we do our jobs, will at one time or another run into a situation that makes us feel angry, uncomfortable, or at a loss about what to say. We might even wonder whether to say anything at all. I'm sure people in this room can think of times like that. Can anyone give me an example?"

In most situations, several people will think of examples. (These may be personal or job-related.) Wait until you have three or four. Then say, "Yes, those are good examples of the kind of situation I mean. Let's go on to look at another situation that may be familiar to some of you.")

I. Pass out "Case for Introductory Discussion." Ask everyone to read it silently, or read it out loud to them. Then begin the discussion, using the questions on the handout. Allow 15-20 minutes for discussion.

II. Pass out "Three Steps to Effective Communication." Give everyone time to read it. Go back to the first case and to the reactions to it. Working in a large group, help everyone develop some other versions of a statement that they might like to make to Mrs. Locke, using the three steps outlined in the handout. Allow about 20 minutes. Write some of the statements on paper, the blackboard or the easel pad.

III. Pass out "The case of the Disappearing Child." Give everyone time to read it or read it aloud. Use the discussion questions to help everyone identify the facts in the situation, their feelings, and the consequences for the driver. Then help everyone work on three-part statements. At this point, you may either remain in a large group or break up into small groups of three to four people. If you work in small groups, have each group write a statement on the pad, board, etc., to be visible to the whole group. In the large group, ask for a volunteer to put up the statements. Work with the group to see if each statement matches the criteria. Allow 20 minutes for this part of the activity.

IV. Ask the group to think up other situations. Practice using "Three Steps to Effective Communication." You can also come prepared with your own vignettes and continue to work in small groups.

At the end of the session, get feedback from participants about the activities or ask them to complete an evaluation form.

Note: You may want to use additional materials from the book, People Skills, to add to this activity. A good follow-up skill is reflective listening.

Variations

The same cases provide useful material to review staff issues about program policies for responding to each of the two situations. Is there a policy? Whose job would it be to speak to each of the parents? When? What other staff members should become involved in the situation?

HANDOUT

Case for Introductory Discussion

For the second time this week, Mrs. Locke does not have her son, Dan, ready when the bus arrives at her stop. As the bus pulls up, she calls from the window, "I'll be right there. He just doesn't want to get ready this morning." In a minute or two, she comes rushing out with Danny in tow. He is silent. She seems frustrated. "You know how much school means to him--he would hate to miss it--and the way I am right now, I don't know what I would do if he were home with me all day. See you later." She doesn't meet the driver's eyes as she is talking, and as soon as she stops, she backs off toward her house.

At the other stops on the route, two other mothers complain because the bus is late. One mother is very angry because she is afraid she will be late for a job interview. When the driver gets back to the center, the teacher says, "Where have you been?" "We wanted to have the health aide come in this morning to do screening. We've been waiting for these kids to get here."

Discussion Questions

1. How would you feel if you were the driver? Towards Mrs. Locke? Toward the other mothers? Toward the classroom teacher?

2. What would you do if this happened again?

3. What could the bus driver say to Mrs. Locke?

4. Do you have concerns that you want to share with the teacher?

HANDOUT

Three Steps to Effective Communication

To make a successful assertion statement, you must learn to identify three components of what you want to say:

1. The facts of the situation, described as specifically as possible.

   Not: "You're always late!"

   Instead: "In the last week, you've been late twice."

2. Your feelings about the situation, or the specific behavior of the other person.

   Not: "You're selfish, or lazy."

   Instead: "I feel frustrated..."

3. The specific consequences of the situation to you.

   Not: "...because everything goes wrong, or it's just not right."

   Instead: "...because I can't finish my route on time, and people get irritated at me."

Put It Together

Describe the situation:

"When you are late twice in one week,"

Describe your feelings:

"I feel frustrated."

Describe the consequence:

"Because I can't finish my route on time and people get angry at me."

Adapted from: People Skills by Robert Bolton.

HANDOUT

Case #2 - The Case of the Disappearing Child

For three days, the driver has pulled up in front of Mrs. Ashford's stop to find no sign of her or her little girl. At the center no one has heard from Mrs. Ashford. When the center tries to contact her, the telephone rings and rings. On the fourth day, the bus driver is approaching Mrs. Ashford's house. While the driver is trying to decide whether to stop or not, Mrs. Ashford comes out the door with her little girl. The driver stops. Mrs. Ashford puts her little girl on the bus, but says nothing to the driver about her three-day "disappearance." The driver waits for her to speak, but she steps back from the bus, waves, and then walks back toward her house.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the important facts of this case for the driver? (Discussion leader should relate this question to your specific transportation policies.)

2. How would you feel if you were the driver? What would the consequence be for you?

3. Try to put together a statement to make to Mrs. Ashford.